(b) whether it is also a fact that no action has been taken so far although the same was forwarded for appropriate action to the concerned officer; and

(c) whether Government propose to open Branch Post Office at Nandla during the financial year 2002- 2003?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The representation No. 18/2002 and 15-07-2002 for opening of a Branch Post Office at Village Nandla, District Shimla was received from the Pradhan, Mahila Mandal Nandla Chhouhara Chadgaon, District Shimla.

(b) No, Sir. The Pradhan, Mahila Mandal Nandla Chhouhara Chadgaon, District Shimla was replied by Himachal Pradesh Circle intimating that opening of a Branch Post Office at village Nandla was not justified under the existing norms for opening of Branch Post Offices. As per the norms, the proposed Branch Post Office should not be less than three Kilo Metres away from the nearest existing post office and its percentage of income to cost is required minimum 15% for hilly area. However, in the instant case, the distance of village Nandla from Jangla Post Office is 1.5 Kilo Metres and anticipated percentage of income to cost is 8.51. Thus appropriate action was taken by the concerned officer.

(c) Since the existing norms for opening of Branch Post Offices are not fulfilled, there is no proposal for opening of a Branch Post Office at village Nandla during financial year 2002-2003.

Computer and internet facility

221. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the States/villages of the country where Government have provided computer and internet facility;

(b) the number of such States/districts/villages of the country where this facility has not yet been extended so far; and

(c) the effective steps being taken by Government for expansion of this facility in all the villages of the country;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) to (c) The Department of Information Technology has implemented a project for setting up Community Information Centres (CICs) at 487 block headquarters in the seven North-East States and Sikkim for promoting application of Information Technology for accelerating socio-economic development of the region. Each CIC has been provided with one server, five client computers, printer, webcam and TV Internet connectivity has been provided through VSATs. There is no plan sanctioned for setting up of CICs in rest of the blocks of the country.

Subsidy in postal services

222. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the subsidy that Government are giving to various postal services since 1992-93, year-wise and item-wise *i.e.* subsidy on post cards registration, money order, etc;

(b) whether Government are thinking of reducing subsidy on the postal services; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) The details of subsidies that Government are providing to various postal services since 1992-93, year-wise and item-wise have been indicated in the Statement enclosed. (*See* below)

(b) and (c) The Department is making efforts continuously to mobilize additional resources through better marketing of premium products like Speed Post, Express Parcel Post, Business Post, Media Post etc. Efforts are also made to generate higher revenue through steps like containing leakage of revenue, introduction of new technology, *viz.* Electronic Franking Machine and introduction of value added services *i.e.* Greeting Post, Data post, Passport service etc. These efforts along with suitable revision of postal rates from time to time are steps adopted to reduce subsidies on various postal services.